

## The Sunday School.

### HOW TO PREPARE A SUNDAY-SCHOOL LESSON.

#### SUGGESTIONS.

1. Be in earnest. Put devotion and diligence into your work. Indifferent preparation leads to half hearted teaching; and half-hearted teaching makes a class listless and inattentive.
2. Keep in the spirit of prayer. Without divine help instruction and exhortation fail of spiritual results.
3. Begin preparation early in the week, and turn the lesson over in the mind while about your daily employment. Meditation will make the passage more familiar and impressive, and frequent application of the verses to the little occurrences of daily life will give you many useful illustrations and lessons.
4. Work along some plan. A well-defined method of work will clarify thought, help in the utilization of material, and give unity, order and force to the teaching.
5. Avoid ruts. Think out some new approach to the main lesson, some new way of setting forth the truth.
6. Adapt your preparation to your class. Every class has a character all its own. To be effective, study your scholars before you study your lesson, adjust your teaching to their intellectual grasp, and make the application appropriate to the need.
7. Be on the lookout for illustrations. They interest the mind, hold the attention, and fasten the truth. Find them whenever you can—in books, periodicals, and in the daily occurrences of life.
8. Think out some appropriate and pertinent questions. Do not depend on the printed questions found in some lesson quarterly, or on such as may suggest themselves at the time of teaching.
9. Use pencil and paper. Jot down your thoughts and revise and rearrange your notes before entering your class.
10. Expect results. After honest work, the teacher has a right to look for some evidence of good being accomplished. God rewards faith as well as works.
11. Do not get discouraged. If you do not immediately see the results you looked for, do not imagine that you are not called to teach; but work harder, pray more earnestly, and change your methods.

#### STEPS.

1. Read the lesson through several times—often enough to get the general contents in the mind. Frequent perusal will fix the main points in the memory, and help you in subsequent study and meditation.

2. Read the lesson again, verse by verse, with prayer for spiritual enlightenment and direction. "If any of you lacketh wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all liberally and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing doubting; for he that doubteth is like the surge of the sea driven by the wind and tossed."

3. Consider the context—that which precedes and follows. Miles Coverdale (1535) was right when he said: "It will greatly help you to understand Scripture if you mark not only what is written, but of whom and to whom, with what words, at what time, where to, with what intent, under what circumstances, considering that which goes before and that which follows."

4. Make good use of the marginal references. Some will be found to be of little benefit; but others will point related passages that explain or throw some light on the text. Let Moses and the prophets, the sweet singers of Israel, the sacred evangelists and apostles, and the divine Teacher of Nazareth speak concerning the matter. "Every Scripture inspired of God" is profitable for teaching and instruction.

5. Study lesson helps. The great publishing houses place within the reach of teachers expositions of the sacred volume by devout and earnest scholars. If you cannot obtain the larger books, do not despise the running notes that are found in the weekly religious papers and lesson quarterlies.

6. Search out all geographical references on the map. Know the location of every district, town, mountain, sea, lake or river mentioned in the lesson and its approximate distance from some well-known center or point of reckoning.

7. Post yourself on the meaning of words and phrases not easily understood. Thus you will be prepared to explain obscure statements and be ready to answer puzzling questions.

8. Take time for meditation. Lessons that seem at first to be dull and pointless will be found, after careful thought, to be not only important, but powerful.

9. Revise your work, pray for help, and go to your class with faith and enthusiasm.

#### REMINDERS.

1. Success is not reached without labor. He who imagines that he has a "teaching genius," and therefore does not require preparation, deceives no one but himself.

2. Ability to hold and interest a class is very important and worth seeking after; but it does not necessarily imply teaching power.

3. No one can teach aright unless he has first been taught of God. Spiritual enlightenment is essential for wisdom, power, and blessing.

4. Brightness holds the attention, earnestness impresses the mind, instruction builds the character; but love wins the soul.

5. The true order is (1) explanation, (2) application, (3) exhortation.—*Rev. Dwight E. Marvin.*

### SUNDAY-SCHOOL'S ONLY FOR "KIDS."

In a recent issue we told a story of a big boy, who, on being invited to Sunday-school said: "Sunday-school? No, Sunday-school's only for kids! My father and mother don't go to Sunday-school; I'm no kid." In an earlier issue we told of a Sunday school in Indiana in which there was not enrolled a single married man or woman. All the "old folks" had graduated and left the work to "the kids." We sometimes indulge in a bit of "Spring poetry" of "our own make," and as spring is almost here now, the signs of its coming may be discerned in the following lines, which drop from our pen in spite of us, after using the chorus of an old, old song as a starter:

"Oh dear, what can the matter be?  
"Oh dear, what can the matter be?  
"Oh dear, what can the matter be?  
WHEN—"Sunday-school's only for kids."

The fathers and mothers they seldom come nigh us,

Big sisters and brothers their presence deny us,  
Somehow we've a feeling they're not over-pious,  
WHERE—"Sunday-school's only for kids."

Chorus, Oh dear.

The Elders and Deacons don't seem much inspired,

The Trustees and Stewards are often "too tired,"  
And every last one of them ought to be "fired"  
WHERE—"Sunday-school's only for kids."

Chorus, Oh dear.

The preacher himself needs a little awaking,  
The fathers and mothers they need a good shaking,

And all the Church Officers need a good "raking"  
WHERE—"Sunday-school's only for kids."

Oh dear, what can the matter be?  
Oh dear, what can the matter be?  
Oh dear, what can the matter be?  
WHEN—"Sunday school's only for kids."

—Sel.

"Goodness expands the heart, and makes it humble. The larger, the better, the nobler your heart is, the more you will be inclined to make allowance for others, and the more you will say and feel: 'God be merciful to me a sinner!'"  
—Robertson.

"Don't hold on with both arms to the cross, but only with one, and with the other reach down and save some soul."